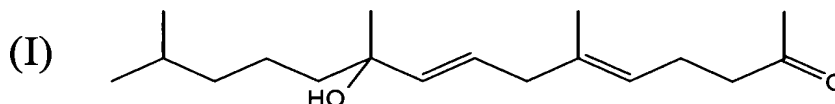


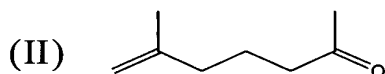
**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

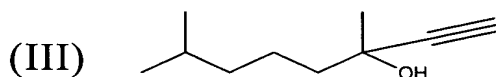
1. (Original) Accordingly, the present invention provides a process for the preparation of a compound of formula (I)



which comprises reacting a compound of formula (II)



with a compound of formula (III)



in the presence of a catalyst and a polar solvent.

2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 in which the polar solvent is selected from dimethylformamide, dimethylacetamide, dimethylsulfoxide or N-methyl pyrrolidone.

3. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in ~~claim 1 or claim 2~~ claim 1 in which the catalyst is selected from cationic divalent ruthenium complexes such as cyclopentadienyl ruthenium hexafluorophosphate tris –

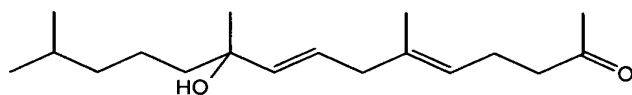
acetonitrile, or pentamethyl-cyclopentadienyl ruthenium hexafluorophosphate tris – acetonitrile.

4. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 carried out in the presence of a second solvent, said second solvent being immiscible with the first solvent.

5. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 4 in which the second solvent is an apolar solvent selected from aliphatic or aromatic hydrocarbons.

6. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 carried out at a temperature of from 20 to 100°C and under atmospheric pressure.

7. (Original) Novel compound characterised by the following structure.



8. (Original) A process for the preparation of phytone which comprises (a) a first step of hydrolysing the compound as claimed in claim 7 to produce a hydrolysis product; and (b) a second step of hydrogenating the hydrolysis product of step (a).

9. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 8 wherein the first step is carried out in the presence of an acid catalyst selected from sulphonic acid, sulphuric acid and hydrogen chloride.

10. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of claim 8 or claim 9~~ claim 8 in which the first step is carried out in the presence of an organic solvent selected from an organic hydrocarbon and an ether.

11. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of claims 8 to 10~~ claim 8 in which the second step is carried out in the presence of hydrogen and a metal or metal salt selected from palladium or platinum, Raney nickel optionally in the presence of iron, manganese, cobalt, copper, zinc or chromium; zinc in the presence of acetic acid; stannous chloride; and molybdenum (III) salts.

12. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the catalyst is palladium supported on charcoal.